

# H•E•A•R™

Helping Everyone Achieve Respect

**Middle School Edition**



**Building Healthy Relationships  
and Ending Bullying in Middle School**



Helping Everyone Achieve Respect

**Middle School Edition**

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**Picture it --- a school and community where everyone treats each other with respect --- all the time.**

Write a few words describing what this would look like and how it could make people feel.

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**Respect: To show consideration for others; Acceptance and courtesy**

(Dictionary.com)

Respecting others means treating them the same way you want to be treated. It means standing up for what is right and being honest and kind.

**How do you show respect?  
Jot down two ways:**

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**Some ways classmates said they show respect:**

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## **You need positive relationships with family, friends, at school, and someday, at work.**

When you give respect, you are most likely to get respect in return. Respect is important in all relationships and having healthy relationships can really impact your happiness.

### **You can achieve respect when you:**

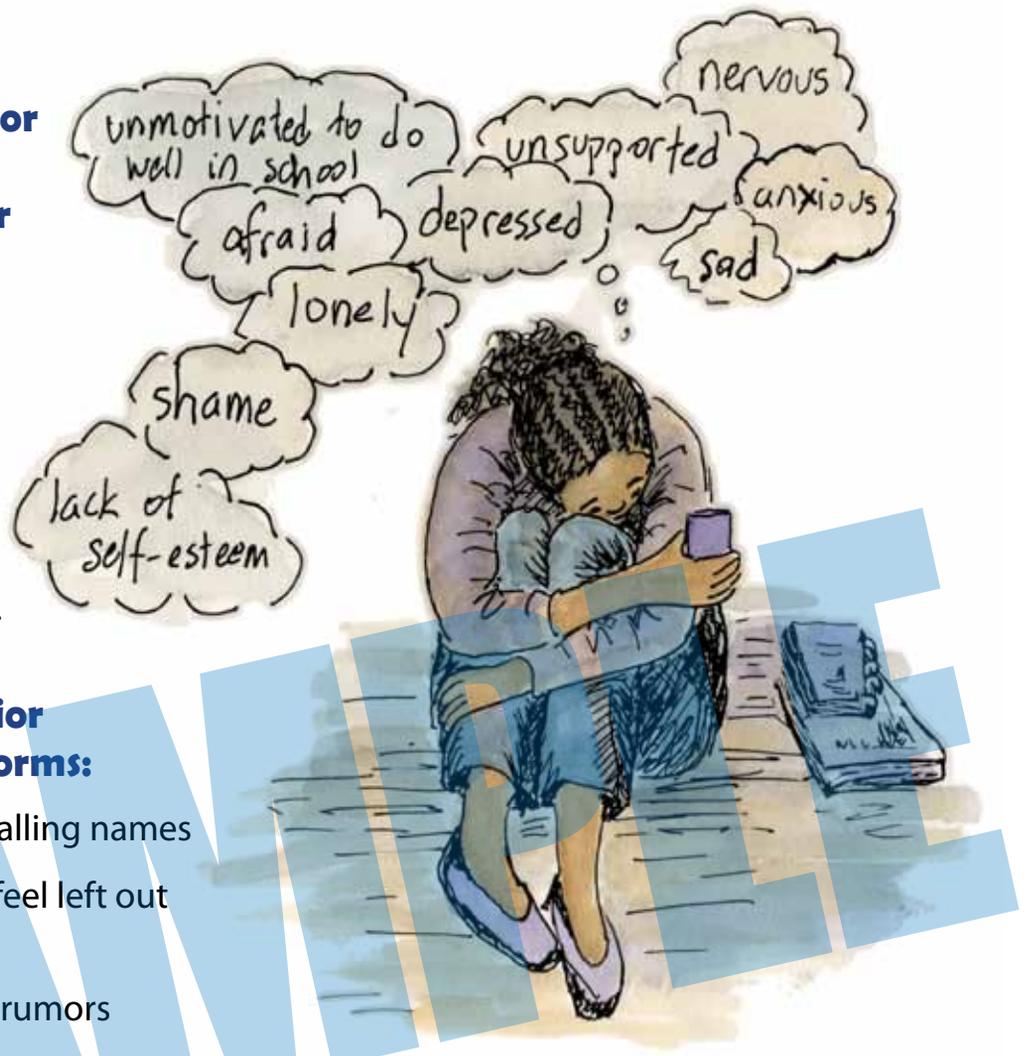
- Treat others like you want to be treated. Have empathy and show consideration and understanding of others' feelings.
- Act honestly, helpfully, and forgive others.
- Use good manners.
- Appreciate people with backgrounds and ideas that are different from your own. Work to solve conflicts.
- Take responsibility for your actions and do what you say you are going to do. Follow rules, fulfill commitments, and set a good example. Avoid blaming and consider the consequences before acting.
- Stand up for your beliefs and do the right thing – show courage. Believe in yourself. Remember, those positive phrases you checked on the previous page reflect YOU!

**Acting respectfully also means applying these behaviors ONLINE, just as you would in person! No social media wars! Recognize that words can hurt.**

**If each of us acted respectfully,  
everyone would feel a greater sense of safety,  
support, belonging, and happiness.**

**On the other hand, disrespectful behavior makes school an unwelcome place for people to learn and build healthy relationships.**

Consider the consequences. People who are treated disrespectfully may feel like this person.



**Disrespectful behavior can take on many forms:**

- Verbal attacks or calling names
- Making someone feel left out of a group
- Spreading unkind rumors
- Making demands about what someone can say or do (like controlling who someone can hang out with)
- Physical attacks like hitting, kicking, or shoving
- Breaking or stealing others' property
- Sending hurtful things on cell phones or online (cyberbullying)

Most school districts have their own definitions of bullying. One popular definition is:

**“bullying is unwanted harmful behavior that involves an imbalance of power and happens over and over again.”**

**The person who bullies or treats others disrespectfully may also feel sad, depressed, lonely, afraid – all the same emotions as the victim.**

These feelings can stay with someone for the rest of their life, so it's important to prevent bullying and deal with the negative feelings right away.

**Disrespectful behavior affects others in the community, too!**

Witnesses of harmful behavior may feel helpless and disrespect can really take its toll on an otherwise safe and supportive school.

**But it doesn't have to be this way!**

School can be a place where everyone tries really hard to do the right thing – a place where everyone supports one another, treats each other with respect, can voice their opinions, and no one fears being different.

**But it's not always easy to do the right thing...**

Here's your challenge:

1. Read each of the following scenarios.
2. For each, think about what you might do. Check any solutions you might try and write down any additional ideas.
3. Jot down your thoughts about why these might or might not work.

**Keep in mind –  
There is often more than one good way  
to respond to disrespectful behavior.**



## Situation #1 – You

Each day after school, you receive a text message from an unknown phone number. At first, the sender made fun of whatever you wore to school that day. After about a week, the sender started calling you a stupid loser and a freak.

This morning, you received a message saying, "I'm going to kick your butt!"



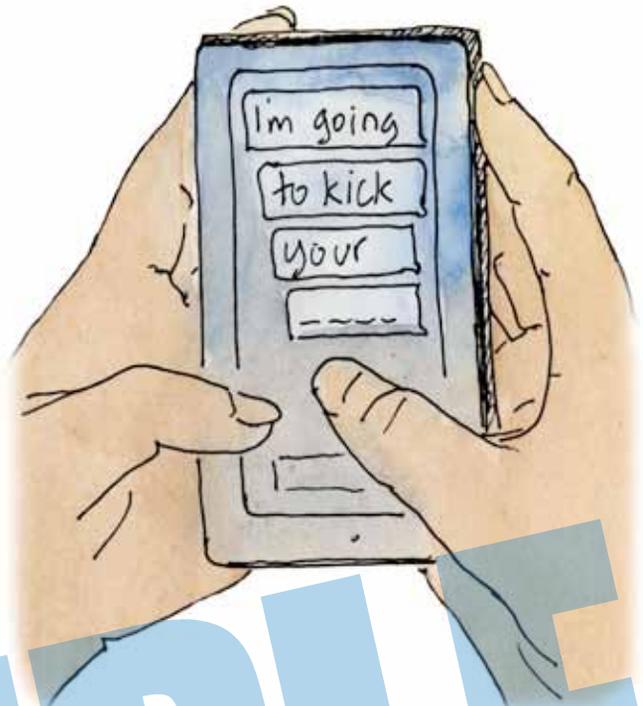
### What do you do?

- Show and tell an adult.
- Ignore the messages.
- Block the messenger.
- Save the messages.
- Print the messages.
- Other ideas \_\_\_\_\_

**Social media and texting are great tools,  
but what you post lasts forever!  
Think before you hit send.  
Forever is a long time!**

## Situation #2 - The Bully

Steve is a kid in my class and I give him a hard time because he gets really worked up about small things. My friends think it's funny when I annoy him. Last week I stole some parts from his science project and vinegar from the project leaked all over him. It was so funny because he got really angry and smelled horrible the rest of the day. When the vinegar spilled, everyone laughed and no one said anything. We also busted out laughing when I poured milk on his pizza at lunch. Now my teacher is calling my dad to discuss my behavior.



Why do you think the bully acts this way at school?

### What do you do?

- Ask the school counselor for advice.
- Talk to the bully in private and say, "It isn't cool to treat people that way. What's going on with you?"
- Don't join in with laughter and name calling.
- Other ideas

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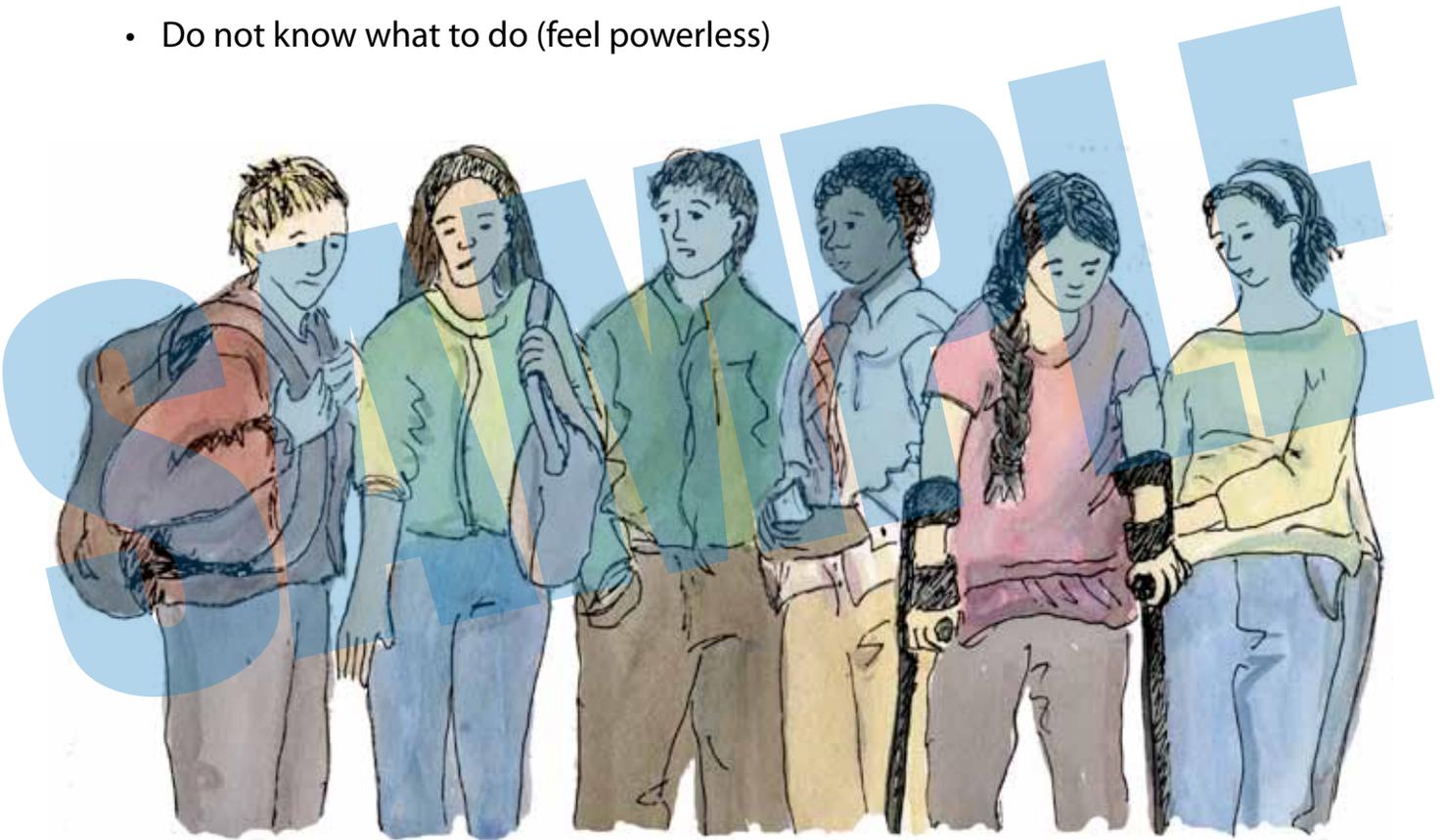
### As you see in this story, sometimes people do nothing to help.

Why do you think so much disrespectful behavior – even bullying – goes unreported? Write two reasons:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

## Some reasons people do nothing to stop disrespectful behavior...

- Fear of making it worse
- Think reporting mean behavior to an adult won't help
- Fear of becoming the target of bullying
- Peer pressure
- Everyone is disrespectful, so why report it?
- Disrespectful behavior is just a part of life in middle school
- Do not know what to do (feel powerless)



**By valuing respect and knowing how to apply some good strategies,** you may be able to overcome these obstacles and **DO SOMETHING** to make your school a great place!

When schools are safe and supportive places, students and adults are happier, grades are higher, and everyone has the chance to be successful.

**“Be the change you want to see in the world.”**

– Mahatma Gandhi

## Good strategies for creating safe and supportive schools:

### If you witness disrespectful behavior...

- Stay safe! Protect yourself and then others.
- Don't join in.
- If you feel safe, tell the bully or disrespectful person that it is not okay.
- Try asking a friend to stand with you when you tell the person to stop.
- Report harmful behavior to a trusted adult.
- Help the victims – let them know you support them. Kindness helps!



### What if someone bullies YOU?

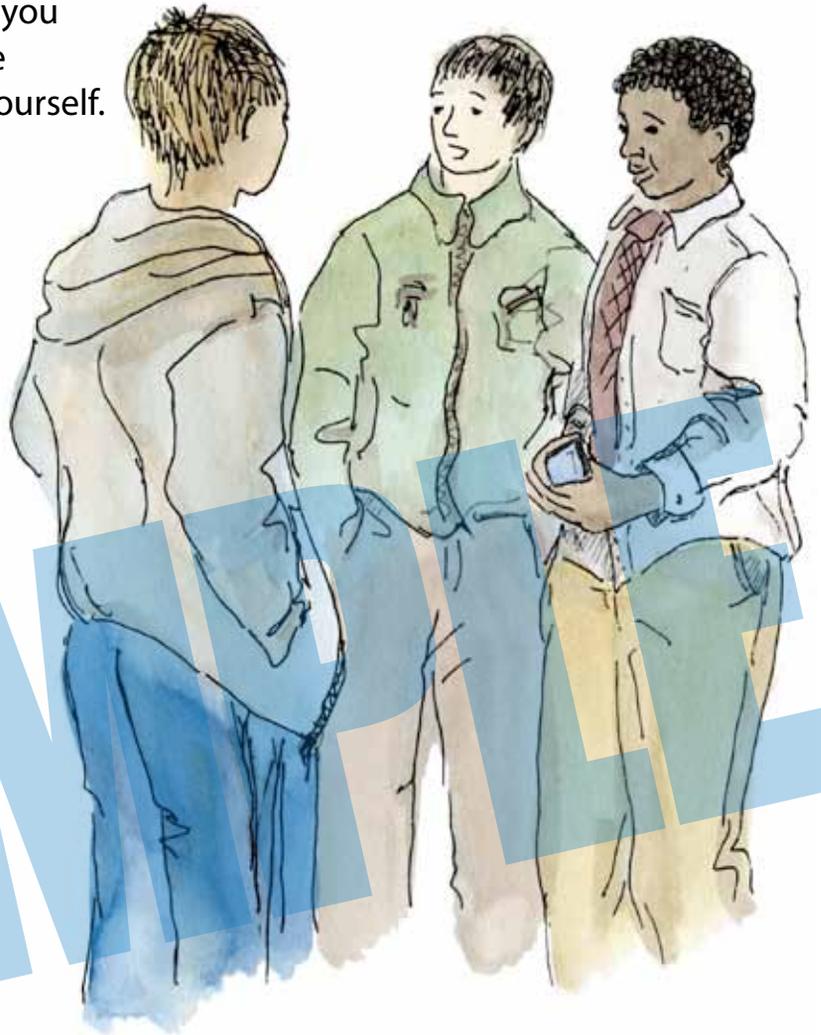
Remember – there may be more than one way to respond.

Let's create a list of possible solutions. Write two things you can do.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

## Did you come up with any of these ideas for responding to bullying?

- Tell the person disrespecting you to stop. Use a calm, firm voice without being disrespectful yourself.
- Let your voice be heard.
  - “Stop.”
  - “Cut it out.”
  - “Quit it.”
- Talk to trusted family members, teachers, counselors, and friends.
- Stay in areas where adults or other people are around.
- Build friendships with people who share your interests and support you. One way to do this is to get involved with a school or community club, team, or service organization.
- Believe in yourself. Focus on your strengths, healthy relationships, and goals.



### **Remember - sending hurtful things on cell phones or online is also bullying. If you are cyberbullied:**

- Never respond to the message.
- Save the message.
- Tell an adult.
- Block users involved in cyberbullying.
- Report cyberbullying to social media sites. For example, contact Facebook’s Bullying Center, Twitter’s Help Center, or Instagram’s Abuse Reporting System.
- [www.project-hear.us](http://www.project-hear.us) provides additional ideas and resources for you, your teachers, and your family members.

## Be the Leader!

Finally, lead the way in making respectful behavior the **ONLY** cool way to act in your school. Here are some ideas, but you may want to come up with your own ideas also.

## Be the one who...

- Gets others to ask, “How would I feel if this was happening to me?” “Is this the right thing to do?”
- Includes those who are regularly excluded. Invite them to join you at lunch, join your team, or join your group.
- Lets others know that disrespect and bullying are not OK!
- Starts a welcoming club for new students.
- Organizes a community service activity.
- Begins a **RESPECT** campaign that will help make your school a safe and supportive place – a place where students can focus on learning and relationships without worrying about getting hurt. (You can get poster and banner artwork, as well as online resources from [www.project-hear.us](http://www.project-hear.us).)
- Talks to a trusted adult if you think some students at your school are stereotyped or left out.
- Asks your friends to join you in stopping the spread of hurtful images and words.
- Chooses not to forward or share disrespectful messages found in emails, texts, instant messaging, blogs, or social media.
- Gets a group of your peers together and meets with school administrators to see how you can work together to create positive change. (See the next section for ideas.)

**These are important questions to explore with your teachers and school leaders to build a more respectful school community. Your ideas?**



1. How can our school regularly ask students about whether we feel safe, cared about, and respected? Can the results be shared with students and parents?

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2. How can we find a confidential way for students to report it when they feel unsafe or mistreated?

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3. Can we have an adult in our school whose job is to make sure that everyone feels safe and respected?

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4. How can we recognize students who model respectful behaviors?

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5. What can we do to make sure students learn as much as possible about skills like solving conflict, empathy for others, and dealing with their emotions?

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6. How can we ensure our teachers are prepared to prevent or react to bullying and other hurtful behavior?

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7. How can we have clear policies about the consequences, as well as support, students will receive when they act in disrespectful ways? Can policies include a clear statement that disrespect is not tolerated?

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8. How can we work together to know how to keep ourselves safe at school and at home? (Example: educating parents, teachers and students about acceptable and safe uses of technology)

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9. How can adults monitor behavior on the bus, in the cafeteria, restrooms, hallways, and other areas?

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10. How can we launch a **RESPECT** campaign?

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## Respect Everyone!

Think back to your mental picture of a school and community where everyone treats others respectfully – all the time. Are you helping to make a difference?

Consider ways you can show respect and write down at least one thing you can do to make a difference.

### Remember:

**Even one act of kindness can make a huge difference to someone!**

### What can you do right now?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

A community full of healthy relationships – and more happiness for everyone – starts with **YOU**. Our vision is a school community where all members, at all times, treat each other with respect.

**Everyone.  
All the time.  
Respect.**

[www.project-hear.us](http://www.project-hear.us)



**SAMPLE**

**It starts with  
you.**